



# USS LST-789

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Builder: Dravo Corporation, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Commissioned: 11 September 1944

Decommissioned: 29 April 1946

Disposition: Sold for commercial operations on 11 December 1947, to the California Co.

Length: 327' 9" oa

Beam: 50'

Draft: 1' 6" bow, 7' 5" stern (unloaded); 8' 2" bow, 14' 1" stern (loaded -- at sea); 3' 1" bow, 9' 6" (loaded -- beaching)

Displacement: 1,625 (light); 4,080 (w/ full load of 2,100 tons)

Propulsion: 2 x General Motors 12-567 diesels, twin shafts/rudders

Range: 24,000 nm @ 9 knots

Top Speed: 11.6 knots

Complement: 111

Troops: 163

Initial Armament: 7 x 40mm (single mount); 6 x 20 mm (single mount); 2 x .50-caliber mgs; 4 x .30-caliber mgs

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## **Commanding Officers:**

LT Harold M. Mulvey, USCGR

LT(jg) Lothrop M. Forbush, USCGR

ENS W. N. Seehorn

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## History:

### **USS LST-789**

#### **LST Flotilla 29, Group 86, Division 171**

The Coast Guard-manned USS *LST-789* was launched at the yards of the Dravo Corporation on the Ohio River at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on 5 August 1944, and on August 31st, she departed for New Orleans, via the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers where she was commissioned on 11 September 1944. She was commissioned with a crew of eight officers and 104 men of the U.S. Coast Guard. On September 20th she departed for shakedown exercises at St. Andrews Bay, Florida, which were completed in 12 days. The ship had been designated flagship of LST Group 86. Returning to New Orleans on October 5th for completion of alterations and loading five sections of LCTs on the main deck she proceeded to Gulfport, Mississippi, for a load of heavy road building equipment.

The 789 departed Gulfport for Pearl Harbor about the middle of October, arriving there on 26 November 1944, via Canal Zone and San Pedro. The next two months were spent in the Hawaiian area on logistics and training maneuvers including a dress rehearsal for the assault on Iwo Jima. On 18 January 1945, with seven officers and 229 men of Company C, 1st Battalion, 14th Division 25th Marines and a cargo of Marine vehicles, she departed Pearl Harbor for Iwo Jima via Eniwetok and Saipan, under operational command of LST Flotilla 21 (CTU 51.13.2). She loaded 17 LVTs at Saipan with five officers and 75 men of the tractor crews and took on two wave guides and men, a beach party of one officer and 12 men and three officers and 77 men of the staff of Compant C, 14th Division, 25th Marines. On the 12th and 13th a final rehearsal had been held off Tinian Island. Arriving off the southeastern shore of Iwo Jima at 0735 on D-day, 19 February 1945, they immediately disembarked their LVTs loaded with Marines with small boats acting as wave guides and after they were landed, some of the LVTs returned and then commenced unloading cargo, continuing to do so for the next three days whenever any LVTs were available. About half the cargo was unloaded by this method as well as 1,000 rounds of 5-inch ammunition to two destroyers, 800 rounds being passed while underway and 200 rounds being transferred by small boat. On D+3 day they beached and unloaded the remainder of their cargo and on D+4 day rendezvoused with Commander LST Group 61 (CTU 51.16.3) and departed for Guam, arriving there on the 28th. While at Iwo Jima they were alerted eight times for air raids and operated their smoke generators as ordered.

Proceeding to Leyte on 3 March 1945, they loaded 17 LVTs and assorted Army vehicles and cargoes and took aboard 24 officers and 440 men of the 383rd Regimental Combat Team and after extensive maneuvers and dress rehearsals departed on March 25th, for the assault on Okinawa. They arrived at Okinawa

on D-day, 1 April 1945, and immediately launched their LVTs loaded with Army assault forces, with small boats acting as wave guides. At 1300 they launched *LCT-901* from the main deck and during the ensuing week unloaded all the Army vehicles and a small amount of bulk cargo by LVT. On the 9th they beached and unloaded some cargo but approaching bad weather necessitated retraction of all LSTs from the beach after about five hours. They beached again on the 12th and had completed unloading cargo by 0700 on the 14th. While beached, Commander LST Group 86 and staff came aboard while Commander LST 85 and staff departed. On the 15th they shot down one enemy Nakajima Ki-43-IIb "Oscar" fighter and the next day departed Okinawa for Ulithi with other units under operational command of LST Flotilla 14 (CTU 51.29.15). While at Okinawa they had experienced about 28 air alerts lasting from one to seven hours each with the smoke generator in operation in most of them. Depending on anchorage, small boats acted as ship patrol during the night as a protection against enemy swimmers and small enemy boats.

Arriving at Ulithi on 22 April 1945, they remained there until 28 May 1945, undergoing repairs, bottom holes suffered while beached being temporarily patched as there was no drydock available. They departed for Noumea on the 26th stopping at Manus, Russell Islands and Tulagi and arriving there on 13 June 1945. Here a cargo of heavy vehicles was taken aboard and on the 20th of June they departed for Guam with other units under command of LST Group 86. Arriving at Guam on 6 July 1945, their cargo was discharged and a drydocking obtained, where the bottom was properly repaired and a tail shaft and screw replaced. Availability for overhaul of main engines followed and the 789 left Guam for Saipan on the 20th arriving on the 22nd. After another main engine overhaul they picked up a load of gasoline for Guam, arriving there on 6 August 1945. The surrender of Japan on the 14th came just as they finished unloading. They were next assigned to carry one half of the 602nd CBMU and NAB, with their equipment and gear to Yokosuka, Japan, and departed on the 20th. On the 26th operational command of Commander LST Group 86 was dissolved and the ship reported to CTG 35.80, reaching Miyata Wan, Sagami Wan off Yahagi, Honshu, Japan on the 28th.

They proceeded to Tokyo Bay on the 30th and beached on the seaplane ramp at the airport of Yokosuka Naval Base where unloading commenced immediately and was completed 2 September 1945. Anchoring off Yokosuka on the 2nd and during the next eight days picked up 203 seamen and four officers for transportation to the United States released under the point system. They departed for Guam on the 10th, arriving on the 16th and remained moored there until the 27th acting as barrack ship until all passengers were taken off, and on that date departed for Leyte. They arrived there on October 2nd and on the 12th departed for Agoo, Luzon, Lingayen Gulf, Philippine Islands to pick up a load of 6th Army elements (four officers and 145 men of the 731st Engineers) with a cargo of motorized equipment. They arrived at Kure, Japan, on 2 November 1945 and beached the next day at Hiro Airport, completing unloading by nightfall

and retracting with the morning tide. They remained at anchor off Hiro Airport until November 9th, when they departed for Saipan arriving on the 16th.

The 789 left Saipan on 26 November 1945, and arrived at Orange, Texas, on 25 January 1946, via Pearl Harbor, San Francisco, Canal Zone and New Orleans. She was decommissioned at Lake Charles, Louisiana on 29 April 1946.

The *LST-789* earned two battle stars for her service during World War II.

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### **Photographs:**

None available.

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### **Sources:**

LST files, Coast Guard Historian's Office.

United States Coast Guard. *The Coast Guard At War. V. Transports and Escorts. Vol. 2.* Washington: Public Information Division, Historical Section, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 1, 1949, pp. 66-116.

United States Navy. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships.* Volume VII. Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1981, pp. 574-742.

